UNITED NATIONS **A**

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/265
30 June 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
Item 20 of the preliminary list*

STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

Letter dated 27 June 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the original of a letter from Mr. Leonid Kuchma, President of Ukraine, concerning the issue of international cooperation in alleviating the negative consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 20 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Anatoli M. ZLENKO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Ukraine
to the United Nations

* A/50/50/Rev.1.

ANNEX

Letter dated 8 June 1995 from the President of Ukraine addressed to the Secretary-General

On the eve of the Summit at Halifax and as a follow-up to our substantial talk during the World Summit for Social Development at Copenhagen, I would like to draw your attention to the top priority problem for Ukraine, which has recently evoked wide international response.

This concerns the Chernobyl disaster, which, by its scale, effect on the ecological situation and socio-economic aftermath, has overstepped the boundaries of one country, presenting a global problem of today.

Our State has experienced by itself all the tragedy of the nuclear disaster and is doing its best to secure a proper safety level in the operating nuclear power plants in the context of the overall reform of the energy supply sector. Special attention is being paid to solving the whole range of problems related to the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant.

We understand world public concern over the ongoing operation of the plant, the accident at which caused so much trouble to the peoples of Europe. We are also aware that it is the "Chernobyl syndrome" rather than the technical condition of the equipment and the safety level of the station that is giving rise to demand on the part of the world community to close the plant down immediately.

Mindful of that factor, Ukraine has taken a principled political decision to close down the Chernobyl plant before the year 2000. The schedule of consecutive decommissioning of the plant's power units worked out by Ukrainian experts has confirmed how strong is our commitment. However, in view of the unbalanced economy and energy supply crisis, Ukraine is at present unable to resolve independently the whole range of issues related to decommissioning the station, including the problem of social protection of its personnel.

We are conscious of the fact that Ukraine must ensure the observance of safety requirements at all stages of the decommissioning of the Chernobyl plant. To that end, preparatory work for erecting spent fuel storage, construction of compensating capacities, implementation of the "Shelter" project and transforming the contaminated zone into an ecologically safe system, must be carried out. Should no solutions with respect to all the above-mentioned measures to be implemented prior to the closure of the plant be found, Chernobyl could well turn into the biggest radioactive waste dump in Europe.

To resolve this vast problem in the shortest possible time, Ukraine counts on relevant technical, technological and financial assistance on the part of G-7 States, the European Union, international organizations and the financial institutions.

In our opinion, the United Nations could also play a special role in developing the international assistance programme. Proceeding from this, may I

address to you, on the eve of the sad date - the tenth anniversary of the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant - a request that you use the high authority of the United Nations and your personal influence with a view to mobilizing joint action by all the world community to stop the "Chernobyl ghost" from wandering across Europe. The complexity of the problem which Ukraine is to resolve jointly with all the countries of the world in the immediate future requires courageous and innovative decisions.

I sincerely hope that the issues raised in this letter will find your understanding and support.

(Signed) Leonid KUCHMA